UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

Essential Music for Peace: Handel's Theodora

Daniel Taylor, *director*

Friday, March 20th, 2025, at 8:00pm | Church of St. Mary Magdalene, 477 Manning Ave, Toronto, ON M6G 2V8

PROGRAM

Theodora

George Frideric Handel (1685–1759)

Soloists in order of appearance:

Alexander Dobson, bass
Christian Masucci-Fachini, countertenor
Owen McCausland, tenor
Erica Harvey, soprano
Jacob Thomas, tenor
Nadia Zbogar, mezzo-soprano
Sarah Shelley, soprano
Jianjing Zhou, soprano
Emma MacNeil, soprano
Kayla Ruiz, soprano
Sasha Koukarina, soprano

Schola Cantorum

Belan Fazio Gonnet, Erica Harvey Sasha Koukarina, Zige Lin, Emma MacNeil, Kayla Ruiz, Jiajing Zhou, *soprano*

Christian Masucci-Facchini, Nadia Zbogar, *alto*

Jeremy Lau, Jacob Thomas, Eyal Stopnicki-Udokang, *tenor*

Henry Paterson, *bass*

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years, it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

As part of the Faculty's commitment to improving Indigenous inclusion, we call upon all members of our community to start/continue their personal journeys towards understanding and acknowledging Indigenous peoples' histories, truths and cultures.
Visit indigenous.utoronto.ca to learn more.

Theatre of Early Music

Louella Alatiit & Christopher Verrette, violin
Matt Antal & Samuel Rothermel, viola
Jessica Korotkin, cello
Iris Leck, double bass
Anthea Conway & Joanna Marsden, flute
Gillian Howard, Karim Nasr oboe
Norman Engel, trumpet
Ryoko Hou & Mathew Larkin, harpsichord

Alexandra Delle Donne, Hannah Lim, Alice Macgregor, *soprano*
Peter Koniers, Ryan McDonald, Zoe Gotziaman, a*lto*
Jordan Baldwin, Jean-Paul Feo, Nathan Gritter, Christopher Mahon, *tenor*
Devyn Pope & David Yung, *bass*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Alexander Dobson, *vocal consultant and guest soloist*

Cristina Prats Costa, *orchestra manager*

Jacob Thomas, *teaching assistant*

With special thanks to

Eric Chow*, concert office supervisor*

LIBRETTO

ACT ONE

Recitative, Valens
'Tis Dioclesian's natal day.
Proclaim throughout the bounds of Antioch
A feast, and solemn sacrifice to Jove.
Whoso disdains to join the sacred rites,
Shall feel our wrath in chastisement, or death.
And this, Septimius, take you in charge.

Air, Valens
Go, my faithful soldier, go:
Let the fragrant incense rise,
To Jove, great ruler of the skies.

Chorus of Heathens
And draw a blessing down,
On his imperial crown,
Who rules the world below.

Air, Valens
Racks, gibbets, sword and fire,
Shall speak my vengeful ire,
Against the stubborn knee.
Nor gushing tears,
Nor ardent pray'rs,
Shall shake our firm decree.

Chorus of Heathens
For ever thus stands fix'd the doom,
Of rebels to the gods and Rome,
While sweeter than the trumpet's sound,
Their groans and cries are heard around.

Recitative, Didymus
Most cruel edict! Sure, thy generous soul,
Septimius, abhors the dreadful task
Of persecution. Ought we not to leave
The free-born mind of man still ever free?
Since vain is the attempt to force belief
With the severest instrument of death?

Air, Didymus
The raptur'd soul defies the sword,
Secure of virtue's claim,
And trusting Heav'n's unerring word,
Enjoys the circling flame.

Recitative, Septimius
I know thy virtues, and ask not thy faith;
Enjoy it as you will, my Didymus.
Though not a Christian, for I worship still
The gods my fathers worship'd, yet I own,
Something within declares for acts of mercy.
But Antioch's President must be obey'd;
Such is the Roman discipline, while we
Can only pity, whom we dare not spare.

Air, Septimius
Descend, kind pity, heav'nly guest,
Descend, and fill each human breast
With sympathizing woe.
That liberty, and peace of mind,
May sweetly harmonize mankind,
And bless the world below.

Recitative, Theodora
Though hard, my friends, yet wholesome are the truths,
Taught in affliction's school, whence the pure soul
Rises refin'd, and soars above the world.

Air, Theodora
Fond, flatt'ring world, adieu!
Thy gaily-smiling pow'r,
Empty treasures,
Fleeting pleasures,
Ne'er shall tempt or charm me more.
Faith inviting,
Hope delighting,
Nobler joys we now pursue.

Chorus of Christians

Come, mighty Father, mighty Lord,
With love our souls inspire,
While grace and truth flow from thy word,
And feed the holy fire.

Recitative, Messenger
Fly, fly, my brethren, heathen rage pursues us swift.
Arm'd with the terrors of insulting death.

Recitative, Irene
Ah! Whither should we fly, or fly from whom?
The Lord is still the same, today, for ever,
And his protection here, and everywhere.
Though gath'ring round our destin'd heads
The storm now thickens, and looks big with fate,
Still shall thy servants wait on Thee, O Lord,
And in thy saving mercy put their trust.

Air, Irene
As with rosy steps the morn,
Advancing, drives the shades of night,
So from virtuous toil well-borne,
Raise Thou our hopes of endless light.
Triumphant saviour, Lord of day,
Thou art the life, the light, the way!

Recitative, Septimius
Mistaken wretches! Why thus blind to fate,
Do ye in private oratories dare
Oppose the President's decree, and scorn
With native rites to celebrate the day
Sacred to Cæsar and protecting Jove?

Air, Septimius
Dread the fruits of Christian folly,
And this stubborn melancholy
Fond of life and liberty.
Chains and dungeons ye are wooing,
And the storm of death pursuing;
Rebels to the known decree.

Recitative, Theodora
Deluded mortal! Call it not rebellion,

That thus we persevere in spirit and truth,
To worship God: it is his dread command,
His whom we cannot, dare not, disobey,
Though death be our reward.

Accompagnato, Theodora
Oh, worse than death indeed! Lead me, ye guards,
Lead me, or to the rack, or to the flames,
I'll thank your gracious mercy.

Air, Theodora
Angels, ever bright and fair,
Take, oh take me to your care;
Speed to your own courts my flight,
Clad in robes of virgin white.

Recitative, Didymus & Irene
Unhappy, happy crew! Why stand ye thus,
Wild with amazement? Say, where is my love,
My kind instructor in fair virtue's path,
My life, my Theodora? Has the tyrant
Seiz'd on his guiltless prey?

Alas! She's gone.
Too late thou cam'st to save, if in thy pow'r
To save, the fairest, noblest, best of women.
A Roman soldier led her trembling hence
To the vile place, where Venus keeps her court.
Yet on his brow reluctance seem'd to sit,
And helpless pity bade us wait our doom.

Air, Didymus
Kind Heav'n, if virtue be thy care,
With courage fire me,
Or art inspire me,
To free the captive fair.
On the wings of the wind will I fly,
With this princess to live, or this Christian to die.

ACT TWO

Recitative, Valens
Ye men of Antioch, with solemn pomp,
Renew the grateful sacrifice to Jove;

And while your songs ascend the vaulted skies,
Pour on the smoking altars floods of wine,
In honour of the smiling deities,
Fair Flora, and the Cyprian queen.

Chorus of Heathens
Queen of summer, queen of love
And thou, cloud-compelling Jove,
Grant a long and happy reign,
To great Cæsar, king of men.

Recitative, Valens
Return, Septimius, to the stubborn maid,
And learn her final resolution.
If ere the sun with prone career has reach'd
The western isles, she deigns an offering
To the great gods, who subjected the world
To conqu'ring Rome, she shall be free; if not,
The meanest of my guards with lustful joy
Shall triumph o'er her boasted chastity.

Recitative, Theodora
O thou bright sun! How sweet thy rays
To health, and liberty! But here, alas,
They swell the agonizing thought of shame,
And pierce my soul with sorrows yet unknown.

Air, Theodora
With darkness deep, as is my woe,
Hide me, ye shades of night;
Your thickest veil around me throw,
Conceal'd from human sight.
Or come thou, death, thy victim save,
Kindly embosom'd in the grave.

Recitative, Theodora
But why art thou disquieted, my soul?
Hark! Heav'n invites thee in sweet rapt'rous strains,
To join the ever-singing, ever-loving choir
Of saints and angels in the courts above.

Air, Theodora
Oh, that I on wings could rise,
Swiftly sailing through the skies,

As skims the silver dove!
That I might rest,
For ever blest,
With harmony and love.

Recitative, Irene
The clouds begin to veil the hemisphere,
And heavily bring on the night, the last
Perhaps to us. Oh, that it were the last
To Theodora, ere she fall a prey
To unexampled lust and cruelty.

Air, Irene
Defend her, Heav'n! Let angels spread
Their viewless tents around her bed.
Keep her from vile assaults secure,
Still ever calm, and ever pure.

Recitative, Didymus
Or lull'd with grief, or rapt her soul to Heav'n
In innocence of thought, entranc'd she lies;
Her beauty shining still, like Cynthia,
Rising in clouded majesty.

Air, Didymus
Sweet rose and lily, flow'ry form,
Take me your faithful guard,
To shield you from bleak wind and storm —
A smile be my reward.

Recitative, Theodora & Didymus
Oh, save me, Heav'n, in this my perilous hour!

Start not, much injur'd princess, I come not
As one, this place might give you cause to dread;
But your deliverer, sent by just Heav'n,
To save the world's unrivall'd ornament
Of virtue, faith, and every Christian grace;
And that dear ornament to Theodora,
Her angel-purity. If you vouchsafe,
But to change habit with your Didymus.

Excellent youth!

I know thy courage, virtue and thy love;
And never can consent they should destroy
Their author. This becomes not Theodora,
But the blind enemies of truth. Oh no,
It must not be! Yet Didymus can give
A boon, will make me happy, nor himself
Endanger.

How, or what? My soul with transport
Listens to the request.

Air, Theodora
The pilgrim's home, the sick man's health,
The captive's ransom, poor man's wealth,
From thee I would receive.
These, and a thousand treasures more,
That gentle death has now in store,
Thy hand and sword can give.

Accompagnato, Didymus & Theodora
Forbid it, Heav'n!
Shall I destroy the life I came to save?
Shall I in Theodora's blood embrue
My guilty hands, and give her death, who taught
Me first to live? Or say, what right have I
To take, what just reflection bids confess
Not at your own disposal? Think it too,
No less a crime, if, thus inflexible,
Your safety you refuse. Time forbids more,
Strait then resolve to gain your liberty,
Preserve your honour, and secure your life.

Ah! What is liberty or life to me,
That Didymus must purchase with his own?

Fear not for me; the pow' r that led me hither
Will guard me hence. If not, His will be done!

Yes, kind deliverer, I will trust that pow'r
To hear my pray'r for thee, so lately heard
For Theodora; who had ne'er exposed
Her friend to shun a danger that concern'd
Only her Life. Farewell, thou generous youth!

Farewell, thou mirror of the virgin state!

Duet, Theodora & Didymus
To thee, thou glorious son of worth,
Be life and safety giv'n.
To thee, whose virtues suit thy birth,
Be every blessing giv'n.
I hope again to meet on earth,
But sure shall meet in Heav'n.

ACT THREE

Aria, Irene
Lord, to Thee each night and day,
Strong in hope, we sing and pray.
Though convulsive rocks the ground,
And thy thunders roll around,
Still to Thee, each night and day,
We sing and pray.

Air, Irene
New scenes of joy come crowding on
While sorrow fleets away,
Like mists before the rising sun
That gives a glorious day.

Recitative, Valens
Is it a Christian virtue then,
To rescue, from the hands of justice, one
Condemn'd by my authority?

Air, Septimius
From virtue springs each gen'rous deed
That claims our grateful pray'r.
Let justice for the hero plead,
And pity save the fair.

Recitative, Didymus & Theodora
And must such beauty suffer?
Such useful valour be destroy'd?
Destroy'd,
Alas, by an unhappy constancy!
Yet deem us not unhappy, gentle friend,
Nor rash; for life we neither hate, nor scorn,

But think it a cheap purchase for the prize
Reserv'd in Heav'n for purity and faith.

Duet, Didymus & Theodora
Streams of pleasure ever flowing,
Fruits ambrosial ever growing,
Golden thrones,
Starry crowns,
Are the triumphs of the blest.
When from life's dull labour free,
Clad with immortality,
They enjoy a lasting rest.
Thither let our hearts aspire:
Objects pure of pure desire,
Still increasing,
Ever pleasing,
Wake the song, and tune the lyre
Of the blissful holy choir.
Exeunt

Recitative, Irene
Ere this, their doom is past and they are gone
To prove that love is stronger far than death.

Chorus of Christians
O love divine, thou source of fame,
Of glory, and all joy!
Let equal fire our souls inflame,
And equal zeal employ,
That we the glorious spring may know,
Whose streams appear'd so bright below

SYNOPSIS & PROGRAM NOTES

Theodora takes place in Antioch in the early 4th century.
Act I
The Roman governor of Antioch, Valens decrees a festival in honour of Emperor Diocletian. Valens further demands each of his officers to make sacrifices to the Roman gods, under the threat of severe punishment (Air: “Racks, gibbets, sword, and fire”).

A young officer, Didymus, unsuccessfully requests exemption from the sacrifices as his faith forbids worshiping the Roman gods. Didymus attempts in vain to draw sympathy of Septemius,

his senior officer. A messenger arrives to forewarn the Christians of the deadly threat they face at the hands of the Romans, but Irene refuses the idea of fleeing (Air: “As with rosy steps the morn”).

A princess and recent convert to Christianity, Theodora, says that she would endure death in service to God (Air: “Angels, ever bright and fair”). Septimius informs her that her reward will not be execution, but prostitution. Theodora pleads for death, and Didymus vows to rescue her.

Act II

Under Valens’s orders, Septimius gives Theodora a final chance to honour the Roman gods and avoid punishment. Imprisoned, Theodora mourns her hardship (Air: “With darkness, deep as is my woe”) and imagines her new life in heaven (Air: “Oh, that I on wings could rise”).
Didymus admits to Septimius that he is a Christian and loves Theodora. Although Septimius is loyal to Valens, he is sympathetic and allows Didymus to visit Theodora in prison. The scene returns to the Christians, where Irene prays for Theodora (Air: “Defend her, Heav’n”).
Didymus offers his uniform to Theodora so that she escape unseen. She urges him to kill her to preserve her honour (Air: “The pilgrim’s home”. He refuses, saying that he cannot end her life. They eventually agree on his plan, and they part (Duet: “To thee, thou glorious son of worth”).
Disguised as Didymus, Theodora escapes. Didymus remains in prison in her place.

Act III

Theodora returns to the Christians, who praise Didymus's selfless act. They learn Valens has captured Didymus, and he will be put to death for his act of treason. As Didymus defends his actions to Valens, Theodora breaks in, demanding that she be condemned instead of Didymus. Valens ignores Septimius’s calls for pity (Air: “From virtue springs each gen’rous deed”) and sentences Theodora and Didymus to death.

Theodora and Didymus face their demise, singing of their sorrow and the eternal bliss that awaits them in heaven (Air and Duet: “Streams of pleasure ever flowing”).
The Christians pray for Theodora and Didymus's salvation. (Chorus: “O, love divine”).

Martyrdom in Theodora

In Theodora, George Frideric Handel looks considers martyrdom not as a tragic endpoint but as a site of spiritual transcendence, ethical agency, and resistance to coercive power. First performed in 1750 in London, the oratorio emerges from a cultural moment shaped by sacred drama, Enlightenment moral philosophy, and Protestant inwardness. Although set during the persecutions under Emperor Diocletian, the work engages not only with early Christian hagiography but also with eighteenth-century debates surrounding conscience, virtue, and the autonomy of the individual subject. Martyrdom is not merely endured but chosen, functioning as a transformative act that redefines suffering, death, and agency.

From the outset, martyrdom is framed as a mode of spiritual transcendence grounded in interiority. Theodora’s response to persecution is marked by composure rather than fear,

suggesting a subjectivity oriented toward the divine rather than the material world. In “Angels, ever bright and fair,” her plea to be taken into heavenly care registers less as lament than as desire—a reorientation of affect toward spiritual fulfillment. Handel’s restrained melodic writing and luminous orchestration reinforce this inward turn, replacing the expected rhetoric of anguish with one of serenity. In Act II, despair in “With darkness, deep as is my woe” is countered by “Oh, that I on wings could rise,” in which imagination displaces confinement. As Peter Brown observes, early Christian martyrdom “transforms the body’s vulnerability into a locus of moral and spiritual authority” (Brown 1988, 203), a dynamic Handel dramatizes musically by aligning suffering with volition.

This interiority simultaneously functions as resistance to imperial power. Valens, the Roman governor, embodies sovereign authority, deploying threats—“Racks, gibbets, sword, and fire”—to enforce compliance. His coercion exemplifies a regime that governs through the spectacle of the body, yet the Christians’ refusal exposes its limits. Didymus’s conversion is particularly significant: as a Roman officer, he rejects allegiance to the empire and embraces martyrdom, asserting ethical self-determination. Here, martyrdom paradoxically becomes a mode of agency, demonstrating that relinquishing life can constitute the ultimate claim to autonomy. As Howard Smither notes, Handel’s oratorios “recast ancient narratives in ways that probe moral and psychological dimensions, rather than merely staging historical events” (Smither 1977, 412). Martyrdom in Theodora thus articulates both spiritual fidelity and a critique of worldly power. The question of agency intersects profoundly with gender and embodiment. Theodora’s sentence—to be sent to a brothel—targets not only her body but her social and symbolic identity. Her preference for death over dishonor reflects an attempt to retain autonomy within a system designed to strip it away. Yet this choice is fraught: it reveals how gendered norms shape the perception of virtue and constrain ethical freedom. Her plea for Didymus to kill her foregrounds the tension between dependence and self-determination, while his refusal reconfigures agency relationally. Their duet, “To thee, thou glorious son of worth,” articulates a shared ethical and emotional commitment, showing that martyrdom can be enacted through mutual recognition as well as individual resolve. Even when escape fails and death becomes inevitable, their acceptance transforms martyrdom into a conscious, collective act.

Martyrdom in Theodora is also a communal and interpretive process. Irene and the chorus frame the meaning of suffering, situating individual death within a spiritual and social narrative. In “Defend her, Heav’n,” Irene’s prayer emphasizes that martyrdom acquires significance through communal acknowledgment. The chorus serves both as witness and moral commentator, guiding audience reception. By the final act, the community interprets the protagonists’ fate not with despair but with reverence. The closing chorus, “O, love divine,” elevates Theodora and Didymus as paradigmatic figures whose deaths reinforce the faith of the community. Martyrdom, therefore, is performative: it produces belief even as it enacts death. The final duet, “Streams of pleasure ever flowing,” exemplifies the re-signification of martyrdom. Suffering gives way to imagery of continuity and abundance, as the protagonists envision an eternal state “from a fountain never dry.” The musical texture—interwoven vocal lines and sustained harmonic suspension—dissolves the boundary between earthly and divine

realms. Death is no longer rupture but transition, and martyrdom is reconstituted as the condition of transcendence. By transforming the act of execution into a site of spiritual and ethical fulfillment, Handel stages martyrdom as both aesthetic and theological revelation. Historically, Theodora's premiere was met with limited popular success, suggesting a disjunction between Handel's introspective treatment of martyrdom and contemporary expectations of spectacle.

Unlike his Old Testament oratorios, it prioritizes psychological depth over dramatic action. Modern scholarship, however, recognizes this as a strength, emphasizing Handel's engagement with ethical, affective, and political dimensions. Theorists of power and subjectivity would note how the oratorio constructs agency through interiority and relational recognition, illustrating that martyrdom is as much a problem of ethics as it is of devotion.

In conclusion, Theodora offers a sophisticated exploration of martyrdom as a practice simultaneously spiritual, ethical, and political. By situating early Christian narratives within an eighteenth-century discourse of conscience and subjectivity, Handel transforms martyrdom into a dynamic concept that interrogates agency, obedience, and transcendence. Theodora and Didymus do not merely endure death; they actively reinterpret it, converting the violence of execution into a site of moral, relational, and spiritual authority. In doing so, Theodora challenges its audience to reconsider suffering and affirms the possibility of freedom, even in the face of death.

*the notes and synopsis are not intended for publication or sharing

BIOS

Founded in 2012 by Daniel Taylor, the **University of Toronto Schola Cantorum** aims to present the brilliant early choral and instrumental repertoire from across the centuries to a new audience. The group's interpretations strive to recreate the original performances of musical works – interpretations led by the energy and insights of the gifted students themselves - in the belief that historical performance ideals and knowledge of the old world are essential for creating music anew. The Schola Cantorum includes students from all levels of study with students representing many voice studios in the faculty. Canada has many university choral ensembles, however the Schola Cantorum is the only large-scale group using period instruments and historically informed performance practices to reveal the beauty of Baroque and early repertoire.

Unequaled collaborations and bespoke partnerships lay the foundation for the **Historical Performance Department**. A place of inspiration and unparalleled collaborative opportunities. Our Apprentice Concerts offer students the chance to play and sing side by side with the finest artists in the world. We embrace our shared values of equal access to opportunity and genuine inclusion through voices heard anew and historical works presented with varied perspectives. We continue our collaborations with renowned scholars such as Dame Emma Kirkby, Nancy Argenta, Charles Daniels, Peter Phillips and The Tallis Scholars, Les Arts Florissants and

Voces8 alongside sought-after diverse international guest performers such as Indigenous Artists-in-Residence Andrew Balfour and Jonathon Adams, Conductor Jordan de Souza, Deepa Johnny as we well hosting the first online masterclasses of Barbara Hannigan, Angela Hewitt, Lynne Dawson as we seek to share our music love in thoughtful engagement with the community and world around us. From the Kammerchor Stuttgart, NY Clarion, the Gabrieli Consort to Voces8, from Joyce DiDonato, Andrea Haines, Ingrid Attrot, Dominique Labelle, Tracy Dahl, Mary Morrison, Avery Amereau, Stephanie Blythe, Catherine Wyn-Rogers, Monica Huisman, Robin Blaze, Michael Chance, to Mel Braun, Daniel Lichti, John Relyea, Angela Hewitt, Patrick Jordan, David Fallis, Martin Haselboeck, Kent Trittle, Braynerd-Blyden Taylor, Nic McGegan and Ben Heppner, we have you covered with sought-after solo artists, educators and leading ensembles. All of this is anchored by the leadership of Daniel Taylor, Julia Wedman, Christopher Bagan, Ivan Jovanovich, John Abberger, Jean MacPhail and Mary Morrison.

British-Canadian baritone **Alexander Dobson** has been praised for his musical and dramatic artistry on both opera and concert stages. He was lauded for his “gripping embodiment of Wozzeck” (Journal Voir) in a production of the Berg opera with Théâtre du Nouveau Monde and Orchestre Métropolitain, conducted by Yannick Nézet-Séguin. Other roles of note include the title role in Don Giovanni, the Count/Le Nozze di Figaro and Thomas Betterton/Prince of Players, all with Florentine Opera, and Guglielmo/Così Fan Tutte, Belcoré /L’elisir d'amore and Ned Keene/Peter Grimes, all with L’Opera de Montréal. Alexander is an alumnus of the University of Toronto.

Daniel John Taylor, O.C. is praised by the critics and audience alike as ‘Canada’s star countertenor’. Since his early career debuts at New York’s Metropolitan Opera, the Glyndebourne Festival, and the Rome Opera, his voice has been hailed as an “unwavering spirit carried aloft above the tumult of earthly existence” (The Toronto Star). The Times says the “beauty of his voice will stop you in your tracks,” while The Guardian calls him “part angel, part man.” Broadway.com recently referred to Daniel as: "The beloved singer, leading figure in the field of Opera, Voice and Early Music and perhaps Canada's most popular voice teacher." ‘Perhaps Additional operatic engagements have included the San Francisco Opera, the Welsh National, Opéra de Montréal, the Canadian Opera Company and his many roles at the Teatro Colon. Taylor has performed with the Edinburgh Festival, the New York Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, Israel Philharmonic, the symphonies of Madrid, Dallas and Toronto and with Tafelmusik. He has been heard in recital at the BBC Proms and at Wigmore Hall in London; at Amsterdam’s Concertgebouw and Zürich’s Tonhalle; in China’s Forbidden City; at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris; and at Carnegie Hall. Canada’s most prolific recording artist, Taylor may be heard on over 120 albums and in films on labels including DG Archiv, Warner, DECCA and SONY. In January 2024, Daniel Taylor became the first musician in history to both sing and lead the orchestra and choir in a State Funeral – the event was a tribute to the life of the Honourable Ed Broadbent and to Social Democracy. Taylor’s productions have been recognized with numerous awards including a GRAMMY Award, Diapason d’Or, BBC Music Awards, JUNO Award, Quebec’s ADISQ and the Grammophon Award among many others. He also appears on Cirque du Soleil recordings of Totem and Avatar. He was awarded the Queen’s Jubilee Medal, the National Medal for Music and named as an Officer of the Order of Canada.